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Security Information

REMARKS OF
MR. ALLEN W. DULLES
AT THE
TWELFTH ORIENTATION COURSE

6 November 1953

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There are just one or two things I want to say. This is really a half-hour in which you talk to me rather than a half-hour in which I make an address.

I have no major reorganizations in mind. The only kind of reorganization I contemplate is a general tightening up and, as time and attrition take their toll, a slight reduction in numbers here in Washington. I think our headquarters should be smaller and our work in the field expanded. We have placed upon us from time to time new tasks and new responsibilities which require additional personnel. In certain areas additional personnel will be required in the field. This will demand of us here in headquarters more efficiency, more performance, and possibly--and this is a headquarters problem--more concentration on the main targets, the main responsibilities, and the most important issues of the day.

What we are seeking in our Agency is quality, devotion and performance. Intelligence can never become an assembly-line type of work. For its success it depends upon the character, ability and hard work of the individual, and no type of organization and no machinery that we install can take the place of that. In the last few months we have had some signal accomplishments, and I have had occasion to be very, very proud of a considerable number of individuals who have had an opportunity to show their mettle and have come through with success.

I have often mentioned my own experience during the war. I arrived in Switzerland in November of 1942 just at the time the curtain came down, and I had no chance to add substantially to my staff. Starting with a small group which was increased by local people whom I found on the spot, I built up an organization which had to concentrate only on certain essential operations. And I found that by and large during the first two years when I was unable to build up a large organization, I was able to do more effective work than when the curtain was raised and I had quite a flood of people.

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I am setting aside an afternoon each week to get around the Agency and to meet with you and talk with you and learn of your own problems and see how the work is being done. I hope to visit all of you in your various lines of work so that before twelve months are up I will have accomplished a complete personal on-the-spot survey. I may not thereby have the answers to all the problems, but I will have a better knowledge of your problems and difficulties, a better knowledge of the Agency, and a better knowledge of you personally.

CIA remains somewhat in the spotlight. I would like to see us stay out of the papers as much as possible. We will probably never stay completely out; but we have to be, to some extent, an anonymous agency. It is the most difficult thing in the world, I think, for a human being to do interesting work, to achieve interesting and significant results and not be able to tell them to the world, and sometimes not even to his own family or friends. And I realize the problem; I have it myself. You will all have it to some extent, but if we are going to succeed, we will have to resist the temptation to talk about what we are doing.

Our relations with other parts of the Government are steadily improving. In the intelligence community, State, Army, Navy, Air, the Joint Chiefs, Atomic Energy Committee, the FBI, all are working together as a team as we never have worked before. There is room for improvement but our present relations are quite satisfactory.

Every Thursday morning when the National Security Council meets, I, or in my absence General Cabell, have the opportunity to brief the National Security Council on the important intelligence developments of the week. This is becoming fixed as a governmental procedure and it gives us an opportunity at the very highest level to present quickly to the leaders in Government, including the President, a sketch of the situation from the intelligence angle. I consider these briefings a trust to exercise, not only on behalf of CIA, but also of the entire intelligence community.

In intelligence today, we face the most difficult task that any intelligence community has ever faced. The Iron Curtain is a reality and a real problem insofar as the procurement of intelligence is concerned. To meet that problem will require more ingenuity and more skill than intelligence agencies have shown in the past. Yet, if we do not meet it, we will not have fulfilled the vital mission we have. We are having a measure of success. The measure of success must be greatly increased in the weeks and months ahead. This is a very real challenge. It is because of the nature of the challenge that we must concentrate on building, on a career basis, individual skills and techniques backed by the greatest improvements available in technical, mechanical and scientific aids. I was greatly gratified recently to see in our Technical Services

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Staff that on the technical-mechanical side we are preparing, for you who will be the operators in that field, the most modern techniques to meet the modern problems of intelligence.

Since I place much emphasis, in fact the top emphasis, upon individual capabilities, I realize that the training programs that Matt Baird and his associates have set up here are a vital and essential part of our work. I had to learn my intelligence background by the case method, and I sometimes wish I could go through the training that you are having.

From this you will realize how much stress I put on protecting you in your jobs and in the opportunities which open to you a future of absorbing interests and of vital importance to the nation. I want you to know that that is my chief concern and I won't let you down.

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Question: What influence do you, as Director of Central Intelligence, have in formulating U.S. policy?

Answer: Policy should be based upon facts. It is our responsibility, in coordination with the other intelligence agencies of the Government, to lay before the National Security Council the facts of given situations. If policy makers propose to base their policy on facts they ought to listen to us and, in general, they do; but I have no absolute control. I cannot force them to take our estimate of a situation as the basis for their policies. I can say generally that a very great respect is shown to the reports and estimates which we present.

Question: Do you believe that Congress will set up a special committee for Intelligence Agencies or for CIA matters?

Answer: Senator Mansfield has introduced a resolution for a Committee on Intelligence that is comparable to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy of the House and the Senate. There is no clear-cut decision as yet. It may be considered, to some extent, at the present session of the Congress. At the moment it seems to me that existing machinery is adequate to bring before the appropriate committees of Congress the essential facts of what we are doing. If the Congress feels that more is needed, naturally we ought to cooperate in giving it the information that it requires within the bounds of the security which is essential for our operations.

Question: As the Director of Central Intelligence, are you ever consulted on the budgets of the departmental intelligence agencies?

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Answer: You can realize that this is rather a difficult and delicate problem for I do not desire to be placed in the position of censor of the expenditures of other agencies although it is my duty under the law to provide a measure of coordination in the intelligence field, to endeavor to prevent duplication by the various agencies, and to try to see that the area is adequately covered by the agency most competent to cover it. I doubt, however, whether I should go into the question of whether the amount of money spent by other agencies in carrying out their intelligence mission should be left at my doorstep.

Question: What is your view regarding the administrative separation of the overt side of the Agency from the covert side in the interests of security and efficiency?

Answer: I think the present administrative arrangement is functioning quite well. We have the overt administration and then we have an Administrative Officer on the covert side, who protects the security of the covert side and maintains necessary liaison with the overt administration. Nothing is perfect in as complicated an organization as we have, but I think this arrangement is pretty satisfactory.

Question: In the past, new and high-ranking operations officers, who have had no previous interest or experience in language, area, or intelligence, have been brought aboard and have been set above career officers of known ability. What is the career management doing about these "political appointees?"

Answer: Since I have been associated with this Agency, and that means even before I became Director, nobody, as far as I know, has been appointed to the Agency for political reasons or under political pressure. If there has been anyone, I don't know the person and I doubt whether the assertion can be documented. I wish the person who asked this question would kindly give the Inspector General--it can be done anonymously--the names of those persons; the Inspector General and I will handle that situation entirely alone; and I may report on it the next time I speak here. But I doubt the assertion. I don't believe it's true.

Question: May we be so optimistic as to look forward to a new building in about three years?

Answer: I hope so. We become involved in the problem of dispersal when we consider a new building. Too wide dispersal would seriously affect our efficiency because of the close relationship we have to the Pentagon, the State Department, and other organizations of government. And, therefore, I think it would be rather difficult for us to accept a dispersal that would take us far away from Washington. We are working very hard on the question of a building. It is at the present time under consideration by the Bureau of the Budget.

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